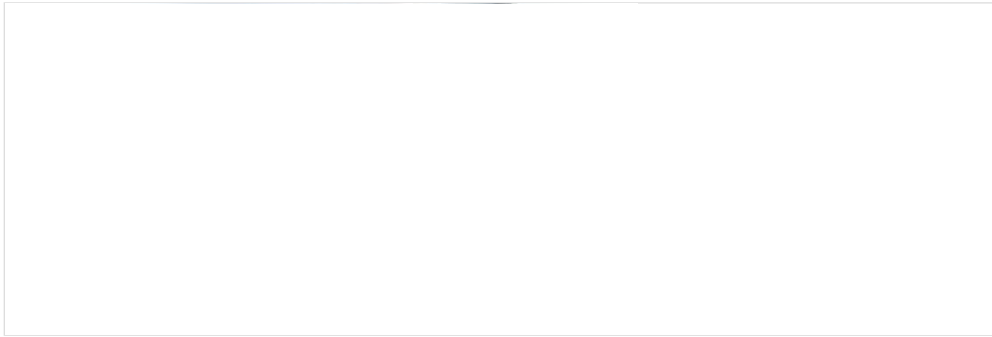


Most popular

- 1.** Downstate car crash kills 5 children
- 2.** FBI, state auditors looking into Walkill accounting errors
- 3.** New York changing bar for student proficiency in math, English
- 4.** Officials say salary laws, hybrid work could narrow NY wage gap
- 5.** 3 years into COVID, NY health care fundamentally changed



NEWS

Galway considers moratorium on solar arrays

Public hearing set for Jan. 3
 by **Andy Liberatore**
 Updated Dec. 29, 2022

Gift this article



1 of 8

The town of Galway has set a public hearing for Jan. 3, 2023, to consider a moratorium on large solar arrays as opposition to them grows. Pictured, a sign near the intersection of Perth Road and North Street on Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022, in Galway, NY.

Jim Franco/Times Union



Next Up: Downstate car crash kills 5 children



While solar arrays are arguably one way to guide the world away from fossil fuels, their proliferation is raising concerns across the region as forests are felled, endangered birds are threatened with displacement and residents rage they are unsightly.

ADVERTISEMENT

Article continues below this ad

One community, Galway, is trying to get ahead of the issue by considering a moratorium on large solar arrays, both as a way to pause their rapid growth around the region and as part of the town's current crafting of its comprehensive plan.

"Solar arrays are kind of a football," said Supervisor Michael Smith, who has called for a public hearing on the matter on Jan. 3, 2023. "I think they are good and have a place. I'm not opposed to them, but if you are cutt net benefit?"

Public hearing on solar array moratorium

When: 6:45 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2023

Where: Galway Town Hall, 5910 Second Ave, Galway

SEE MORE

He also said that residents who have built expensive homes don't want to look in their backyard to see rows of metallic and glass panels. At the same time, he said those with large tracts of land are getting attractive offers from solar companies to either buy or lease the land.

ADVERTISEMENT

Article continues below this ad

Ad 

Dandelion Geothermal
 NY's #1 Geothermal Installer. Upgrade For \$0 Down. No Oil, No Gas, No Hassle.

 dandelionene

"The dollars they are offering some people are tremendous," Smith said.

The consideration of a moratorium will not stop the construction of a 20-acre array on Perth Road in Galway, which has already been approved. TJA-NY will build the \$7 million 3.5 megawatt solar array, which President Michael Frateschi said will pay landowners an estimated \$1,200 per acre per year for solar arrays. For a 20-acre site, the landowner would receive about \$24,000 a year. Frateschi said that helps farmers who may be land rich but financially strained.

"The next generation doesn't want to farm," Frateschi said. "But they want to keep the land in their family. This is a good supplemental income. I've had projects that we took 25 acres out of a 125-acre farm. It worked out well for them, make money off the solar and continue to farm."

Frateschi argues it's a good deal for the town too as it will not burden the local infrastructure and enhances the electrical grid.

ADVERTISEMENT

Article continues below this ad

Ad 

Dandelion Geothermal
 NY's #1 Geothermal Installer. Upgrade For \$0 Down. No Oil, No Gas, No Hassle.

 dandelionene

“It provides stability and resiliency to the electrical grid,” Frateschi said. “It doesn’t tie into sewer, water or gas. There is very little traffic to maintain it, there is no noise, no light pollution.”

Regarding residents’ concerns over views, he said the site is “fully wooded” and that the array would be shielded by trees.

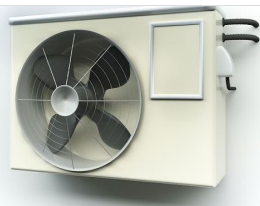
“It’s hidden,” Frateschi said.

Still, the concerns over solar panel arrays are many. [The town of Wilton is discussing a \\$10,000 per acre fee on solar arrays that can be used toward land preservation as two planned arrays there will take down forests.](#) In Fort Edward, [the Grassland Bird Trust is seeking to limit the loss of habitat and hunting grounds for raptors, likely casualties of a proposed network of 750 acres of solar panels.](#) In Schoharie County, [towns are suing the state over how the arrays can be assessed,](#) arguing rules will shortchange them out of millions.

ADVERTISEMENT

Article continues below this ad

Ad



Dandelion Geothermal

NY’s #1 Geothermal Installer. Upgrade For \$0 Down. No Oil, No Gas

 dandelionenergy.com

The concerns aren’t limited to just where the solar panels go and how much money they would generate for a town. There are also worries that damaged panels could leach heavy metals into the soil and about how the panels will be disposed of after they are decommissioned. [A 2020 article from the American Experiment, a nonprofit think tank in Minnesota, noted that “that solar panels contain toxic heavy metals that can pose a risk to the environment should they leak out” and that an article in Grist, a nonprofit media group focused on climate solutions, cited International Renewable Energy Agency estimates that by 2050, the world will generate six million metric tons of solar panel waste annually.](#)

Frateschi argues that metals would only leach out of solar panels if they were damaged by a severe tornado and that when the life of the panel has expired, the materials will be recycled. He also said his company’s Galway project, which has undergone the state environmental quality review, does not endanger any wildlife.

“It’s a sensitive topic and transparency goes a long way,” he said.

Smith wants his community to have an opportunity to raise questions and have residents



ADVERTISEMENT
Article continues below this ad

“There is significant opposition to them for various reasons,” Smith said. “There is the question of what to do with them after they outlived their life? There is a lot of bad stuff in them. If a tree falls on one of the panels, does something leak out? Who knows. Solar panels are not a perfect scenario by any means.”

Sign up for the Daily Headlines newsletter

Stay informed with a daily digest of top headlines.

Email

SIGN UP

By signing up, you agree to our [Terms of Use](#) and acknowledge that your information will be used as described in our [Privacy Policy](#).



Written By
Wendy Liberatore

Reach Wendy on

Wendy Liberatore covers communities in Saratoga County. Prior to joining the Times Union, she wrote features on the arts and dance for the Daily Gazette, Saratoga Living and the Saratogian. She also worked for magazines in Westchester County and was an education reporter with the Bronxville Review-Press and Reporter. She can be reached at wliberatore@timesunion.com, or [518-491-0454](tel:518-491-0454) or [518-454-5445](tel:518-454-5445).

America's Most Miserable Cities, Ranked 1-30

Definition | Sponsored

Why CVS Keeps Quiet about this 87¢ ED Med Program

Public Health Forum by Friday Plans | Sponsored

Learn More

The 21 Most Beautiful Women Of All-Time, Ranked In Order

YourDIY | Sponsored



The Worst Tourist Trap In Every State (See The List)

Definition | Sponsored

The Volkswagen Bus Is Back With A Vengeance

The New VW Bus | Sponsored

Learn More

These travel vans have done it again. These vans have left us speechless

Camper Van Deals | Top Searches | Sponsored

Search Now

Kate Jackson, 74, Is Only A Shadow Of Her Former Self

Refinance Gold | Sponsored

Nutrisystem vs. WW vs. Noom

Nutrisystem Sale: Save 50% OFF Today

Topdust for Nutrisystem | Sponsored

Read More

10 of The Most Bizarre Mormon Beliefs

YourBump | Sponsored

Say Bye To Expensive Roofing (Roofers Are Furious)

Roofing Prices | Search Ads | Sponsored



TOP

ABOUT

- Our Company
- Terms of Use
- General Standards and Practices
- Privacy Notice
- Newspaper Delivery Safety Procedures
- Your California Privacy Rights
- Advertising
- Jobs at the Times Union
- Interest Based Ads

CONTACT

- Contact Us
- Celebrations
- Weather
- Obituaries
- School Closings
- Online Store
- Events Calendar
- Puzzles Palace



SERVICES

[Subscriber Services](#)

[Corporate Subscriptions](#)

[Home Delivery](#)

[Mobile App](#)

[Become a Carrier](#)

[Copyright and Reprint](#)

[e-Edition](#)

[Archives](#)

HEARST *newspapers*

©2023 The Hearst Corporation

